

## PUBLIC VALUE PARTNERSHIPS



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## “The 3 Rs” at work in Montana

Public Value Partnership grants between Montana nonprofit arts organizations and the Montana Arts Council champion the fact that the arts are of benefit to all the citizens of Montana and are worthy of state and federal investment.

Public Value Partnerships utilize three tools we call “The Three Rs” to expand the public value of the work being done by Montana’s non-profit arts organizations:

- Building relationships;
- Creating greater relevance and meaning; and
- Establishing return on investment.

MAC believes that using “The Three Rs” strengthens participation, understanding and support from audiences, donors and funders. We’d like to share some of the best examples of these stories with you from 2011:

## Four ways to supercharge a fundraising event

The following appeared in GuideStar, and is a guest post by Joe Garecht, founder of The Fundraising Authority:

Holding a fundraising event takes a lot of time and resources from your nonprofit. So many resources, in fact, that there’s no excuse for not doing everything you can to maximize the revenue you raise at each and every fundraising event you hold.

He suggests four ways to supercharge your next fundraising event. Read the entire post at [trust.guidestar.org](http://trust.guidestar.org).



Patrons gather in the lobby before a Great Falls Symphony concert.

## Building Relationships

**Great Falls Symphony:** What we have learned is that yes, two-way communication is indeed a challenge! We are pretty effective in securing and encouraging feedback from particular segments of our symphony “family,” but on the larger scale, with over 1,100 season ticket holders, our portion, i.e. the outbound half of the two-way conversation, is much easier to accomplish than the inbound. We do strive to encourage communication in various ways:

- Soliciting feedback through a “contact us” button on the GFSA and the Youth Orchestra websites and keeping an active presence on Facebook for the symphony, the ensembles and the Youth Orchestra. Although we realize that not everyone uses Facebook, this seems to be one of the timeliest means of interactive communication with our “friends.”
- Making two complimentary “introduce a friend” coupons available to ticket holders who have someone they feel might become a future ticket holder, so that they may share their symphony experience with them. Through their feedback, we have learned that the current ticket holder gains a sense of partnership with the organization and a sense of ownership in what we do.
- Listening. On the street, at community

meetings, in the grocery store – wherever they are, we ask our board members, staff and musicians to engage in conversation with people they see. We find this to be a simple, yet effective means of gathering information and building relationships. We hear why people do go to the symphony (and why they don’t); what they enjoyed about a concert or guest artist; what they would like to hear, etc.

• Representatives from all our component artistic groups – the orchestra, choir, Cascade Quartet, Chinook Winds and Youth Orchestra – are represented on the GFSA Board of Directors. Because of potential conflict of interest issues, they are not voting members but are invited to serve in the capacity of two-way communicators with responsibility to take information about the organization back to their respective ensembles and, vice-versa, to bring ideas and information to the board.

## Creating Relevance

**Clay Studio of Missoula:** We made greater connections between our programs and participants in several ways.

First, building upon our established yearly events, we hosted a family open house during the winter holiday season in 2010. We provided ceramics projects for youth and families, refreshments, a raffle, music and a silent auction of locally made ceramics. The event was also attended by our artists-in-residence, who opened up their studio spaces for the evening.

Next, our 2010 workshop series connected local students and artists with local and national professional ceramicists who shared insight into their specialized techniques and artistic ideas. We have also implemented Ceramics Socials every few months, which are simply opportunities for those involved with The Clay Studio of Missoula in any capacity to get to know each other and socialize in a casual, non-academic setting.

Our artist-in-residence, Larry Phan, who began hosting class potlucks at the studio, inspired these events. His intermediate students developed an amazing group dynamic as they got to know each other and Larry better. Many of them took his intermediate pottery class again and again, building on their knowledge base and expanding their feeling of community.



Clay Studio of Missoula hosts an open house.



Robert Wood is the artist director of Venture Theatre in Billings.

## Return on Investment

**Venture Theatre in Billings:** We work with hundreds of kids every year at Venture, and we affect each one in some way. But how we know Venture is working is when it touches the life of one child and changes them.

During our summer musical this year a 15-year-old participant said to her director (paraphrased from the director’s memory), “You know, Venture saved me. Venture is why I am here today, doing OK and being me.”

She went on to tell a bit about her life. She had been hanging out with the wrong crowd, trying to fit in. And things were “just getting bad.” Her family was in despair, trying to get her back on track, and visiting treatment centers and youth discipline camps in their pursuit of options.

This young woman had been a Venture kid

for a long time, but could feel herself pulling away as she started to get deeper into this “wrong crowd.” She told the director, “One day Robert (Wood, artistic director) called me. He called ME! And he told me he needed me. He needed MY voice, my talent for a show coming up. An adult show.

“Right that minute my life changed. I was important. I was needed. I had to get myself on track so I could answer that call.”

She said that doing the chorus part in that show was when she understood what the word “proud” really meant. “I was proud of myself and I knew Robert was proud of me. I did it. And I was good.”

Just 10 months later, she stage-managed a show, ran lights for a production, assisted with youth summer camp, and has been cast in another upcoming production. When we see her walk down the sidewalk to Venture we love to watch her smile just before she walks in the door, and then follow her smile into the building.

## Montana Cultural Treasures goes mobile

By Jacque Walawander

This summer, Montana’s Cultural Treasures – an essential guidebook to our state’s creative and historic venues and organizations – debuted a mobile site and revamped its website, [www.montanasculturaltreasures.com](http://www.montanasculturaltreasures.com).

Our print publication has been keeping Montana residents and visitors informed about the arts for the past 18 years. We wanted to make our online reader’s experience just as user-friendly and helpful.

Ideal for tourists, the mobile site can connect the art-starved with galleries, fun-lovers with festivals, bookworms with bookstores, history buffs with the Wild West, the intellectually curious with

museums, and potential audience members with live performances. We’re excited about offering a mobile version to unite the public and the Montana arts community easily and efficiently.

Go to [m.montanasculturaltreasures.com](http://m.montanasculturaltreasures.com), select the category or city you’re interested in and you’ll get a list of corresponding businesses along with their contact info, including URL.

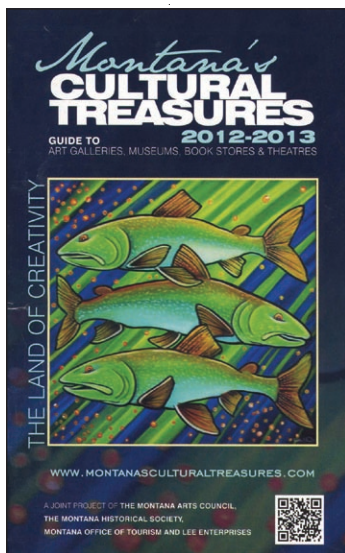
Our website’s redesign reflects the 2012-2013 issue’s cover and features attention-grabbing works from local artists. Art galleries, museums, performing arts, festivals, literary treasures, and historic sites can each be searched exclusively,

or visitors can choose to search a particular city’s cultural opportunities. Not only will the results screen pull up contact information for each business like the mobile site, but ads will also be included, allowing the viewer to get a better feel for the art or event.

Wish you could view Montana’s Cultural Treasures from cover to cover but don’t have a copy? “Page” through the electronic

flipbook and you’ll see everything art from Absarokee to Wisdom.

Montana’s Cultural Treasures is a joint project of the Montana Arts Council, The Montana Historical Society, Montana Office of Tourism and Lee Enterprises.



“Yellowstone Falls” by Monte Dolack, Monte Dolack Gallery, Missoula



“Good Catch” by Nancy Cawdrey, Nancy Cawdrey Studios and Gallery, Bigfork